

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1985

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2921

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS

SUBJECT: YOUTH PARA

REF: A. STATE 070302 B. TUNIS 2332

FOLLOWING ARE COUNTRY TEAM NARRATIVE RESPONSES ON YOUTH PARA
CORRELATED TO SECTIONS GIVEN IN REF A. PERCENTAGES REMAIN
AS SUBMITTED IN REF B.

I B YOUTH CATEGORIES - RATIONALE:

FUTURE LEADERSHIP AND OPINION MAKERS IN TUNISIAN SOCIETY ARE
MOST LIKELY TO RISE IN RANKS OF CURRENT INSTITUTIONS. FOR
THIS REASON WE HAVE GIVEN GREAT DEAL OF WEIGHT TO YOUNG
BUREAUCRATS, POLITICAL LEADERS, PROFESSIONALS IN BUSINESS
AND INDUSTRY, AND MILITARY OFFICERS. YOUNG MILITARY OFFICERS
RECEIVED GREATER WEIGHT THAN MILITARY'S CURRENT POSITION IN
TUNISIA WOULD JUSTIFY, BUT BECAUSE OF PRESENCE OF MILITARY
REGIME IN EASTERN NEIGHBOR LIBYA AND QUASI- MILITARY REGIME IN
WESTERN NEIGHBOR ALGERIA, LARGER FUTURE ROLE FOR MILITARY
QUITE POSSIBLE HERE. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY IS AREA TO WHICH
MORE AND MORE BRIGHT YOUNG TUNISIANS ARE RETURNING. MANY OF

COMPANIES ARE GOVERNMENT OWNED AND OPERATED, BUT THERE STILL
MORE FREEDOM OF ACTION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCEMENT IN
THIS AREA THAN IN GOVERNMENT. THOSE WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL IN
THIS AREA WILL OBVIOUSLY WIELD ECONOMIC POWER (AND THUS
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POLITICAL POWER) AND WILL NATURALLY BECOME POSSIBILITIES FOR
GOVERNMENTAL LEADERSHIP POSTS.

WE ALSO CONSIDER STUDENT MOVEMENT TO BE VERY IMPORTANT,
ESPECIALLY AS VEHICLE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE (EITHER GRADUAL OR

RADICAL). TODAY'S STUDENTS ARE OBVIOUSLY TOMORROW'S BUREAUCRATS AND BUSINESSMEN OR UNEMPLOYED REVOLUTIONARIES. IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO STUDENTS MAY NOT BE IMMEDIATELY EVIDENT FROM PERCENTAGES LISTED, HOWEVER, SINCE STUDENTS MAKE UP PARTS OF SEVERAL DIFFERENT CATEGORIES. THUS, SOME OF YOUNG POLITICAL LEADERS ARE STUDENTS, AND SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF LEADERS OF DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS CONSIST OF STUDENTS. WHEN VARIOUS STUDENT CATEGORIES ARE COMBINED, STUDENTS WOULD RECEIVE ABOUT 20 PER CENT OF WEIGHT.

I C SHORT- TERM YOUTH IMPACT:

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT STUDENTS, IN COMBINATION WITH LABOR, COULD GREATLY AFFECT US INTERESTS HERE IN NEXT SEVERAL YEARS BY CAUSING GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE OR MODIFY ITS POLICIES. STUDENT- LABOR JOINT ACTION HAS RECENTLY HAD SOME SUCCESS IN GETTING GOVERNMENT TO ACT ON CERTAIN PROBLEMS, AND THESE SUCCESSES COULD EASILY ENCOURAGE MORE EXTENSIVE ATTEMPTS TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT. MOST LIKELY DIRECTION OF CHANGE WOULD BE SHIFT IN TUNISIAN RELATIONS TO MORE ACTIVELY PAN- ARAB STANCE, WHICH COULD INVOLVE LESS FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD USG. STUDENT- LABOR DEMONSTRATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THEIR POSITIONS COULD ALSO CAUSE SECURITY PROBLEMS FOR MISSION. YOUNG MILITARY COULD ALSO COME TO FORE IN NEXT FOUR YEARS AND IF THEY WERE TO IMITATE LIBYAN EXAMPLE THEY COULD DEFINITELY AFFECT US INTERESTS.

II B OBJECTIVES - RATIONALE :

TUNISIA, AS MODERATE ARAB COUNTRY, HAS BEEN FRIENDLY TOWARD USG IN PAST YEARS, AND HAS BEEN MORE SYMPATHETIC TOWARD OUR POLICY THAN MOST MOST ARAB COUNTRIES. MUCH OF THIS BECAUSE PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA FRIEND OF U. S. HOWEVER, YOUNGER GENERATION TENDS TO BE MORE PAN- ARAB AND NOT AS AWARE OF US' S PAST ROLE IN FRIENDSHIP IN TUNISIA. THUS, CREATING AND MAINTAINING FAVORABLE ATTITUDES TOWARD U. S. VERY IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE.

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OBVIOUSLY, INSURING ACCESS TO FUTURE LEADERSHIP ALSO OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE IF EMBASSY TO CONTINUE TO FUNCTION. HOWEVER, OUR MAIN INTERESTS HERE ARE INCREASINGLY BECOMING ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL, AND THUS WE ARE CONCERNED FOR NATIONAL AS WELL AS HUMANITARIAN REASONS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF TUNISIA AND ADOPTION OF MORE LIBERALIZED ECONOMIC SYSTEM.

III A RESOURCES - IMPROVEMENTS:

ONE ADDITION THAT WE THINK WOULD GREATLY IMPROVE OUR YOUTH WORK IS SPECIFIC REPRESENTATIONAL FUND FOR YOUTH ALLOCATED BY DEPARTMENT. THIS WOULD ENABLE OFFICERS (INCLUDING YOUNG OFFICERS) TO GIVE MORE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AIMED PRIMARILY AT

" UP- AND- COMERS" AND NOT ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED.

REGARDING EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AND TRAVEL GRANTS, WE FEEL THAT IT IS IN GENERAL MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE TO HAVE TUNISIANS VISIT U. S. THAN VICE VERSA. WE THEREFORE ASSIGN RELATIVELY LOWER PRIORITY TO ACADEMIC AND OTHER GRANTS TO AMERICAN STUDENTS AND AMERICAN RESEARCH PROFESSORS THAN WE DO TO TRAINING AND OTHER GRANTS FOR TUNISIANS.

III B RESOURCES - PRIVATE:

FOR REASONS CITED ABOVE, WE THINK THAT PRIVATE RESOURCES WOULD BE BEST SPENT IN BRINGING TUNISIANS TO UNITED STATES, EITHER FOR STUDY, TRAINING OR FOR VISITS. POSSIBLE SOURCES ARE INDUSTRY, FOUNDATIONS AND UNIVERSITIES.

III C RESOURCES - PEACE CORPS :

WHILE PEACE CORPS MAKES NO DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO MISSION' S YOUTH EFFORT, AND, IN FACT FOR GOOD REASONS DOES NOT WANT TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS TYPE OF PROGRAM, THEY DO HAVE CONSIDERABLE INDIRECT IMPACT ON OUR EFFORT. PCVS COME INTO MORE DIRECT AND CONSTANT CONTACT WITH WIDER RANGE OF COUNTRY' S YOUTH THAN ANY OTHER SECTION OF MISSION WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION USIS. THIS INCLUDES SEGMENT OF POPULATION THAT IS NOT LIKELY TO RISE TO INFLUENCE (FOR EXAMPLE, FARMERS) BUT WHOSE
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ATTITUDES ARE IMPORTANT NONETHELESS. IN GENERAL, PCVS DO GREAT DEAL TO CREATE FAVORABLE ATTITUDES TOWARD AMERICANS, AND THUS TOWARD UNITED STATES. SINCE MAY PCVS ARE SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS, THEY ARE IN POSITION FAVORABLY TO INFLUENCE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE FUTURE LEADERS. HOWEVER, WE FEEL THAT NO YOUTH PROGRAM AS SUCH SHOULD BE SET UP FOR PEACE CORPS. PCVS WILL BEST CREATE AND MAINTAIN FAVORABLE ATTITUDES TOWARD U. S. BY BEING THEMSELVES.

IV B RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH:

OVER 50 PER CENT OF TUNISIAN POPULATION IS UNDER TWENTY YEARS OLD, AND THIS PERCENTAGE WILL INCREASE IN NEXT TEN YEARS. THERE ARE ALSO MANY THIRTY- AND FORTY- YEARS- OLDS WHO CLASSIFY AS YOUTH UNDER DEFINITIONS OF THIS PARA, AND WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN SECOND ECHELONS OF LEADERSHIP. MUCH OF CURRENT LEADERSHIP MADE UP OF OLD, LONG- TIME PARTY MILITANTS, WHO HAVE BEEN ACTIVE SINCE 1930 S, AND THEREFORE LIKELY TO PASS FROM POLITICAL SCENE MORE OR LESS AS GROUP. THUS, THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE MANY POSITIONS TO FILL, AND MANY " YOUTH" TO FILL THEM.
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